Interview with Doris Virginia Metcalf

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Foreign Service Spouse Series

DORIS VIRGINIA METCALF

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Q: How did you happen to come to Washington?

METCALF: For me, I was working in the accounting department of the Finance Office branch of the War Department, in 1942-1943; now Department of Defense, at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. While I was there, one of my friends asked for a transfer to the State Department. She got it and left the office, so I thought that was for me: I did the same thing. While I awaited a reply, there was also a group — three or four people, as I remember, maybe only two — from the State Department, who went up there to recruit government girls from the Minneapolis/St. Paul area.

Statistics showed that there were qualified women in that area and probably available.

All this came together. I got my transfer from the War Department and came to Washington in October 1943. I stayed here about five months, and during that time I was given a rather broad orientation for my possible duties in the Foreign Service. One of the big things — it was wartime — was cryptography, and I spent a couple of months in that department. I was also in Visa, and Passports. And as you can imagine, I did everything but any accounting, (laughing) of course. You know, what used to be standard talk during the war is “never admit that you type.” And I did admit that I typed, and I think that's how

or why my whole focus changed and my path led in other directions. I've never been sorry about this at all; I think it gave me broader opportunities, really. Otherwise I'd just have been stuck in somebody's accounting department somewhere.

After this training period I received orders that I would be sent to Istanbul. The funny part of that is that of all the places on earth, that was the place I most wanted to go. I talked to my friends about it. I never, of course, expected to go there, I would have been willing to go wherever they sent me. I was then living in a boarding house off Dupont Circle. The telephone rang, someone downstairs answered it and called me down. The caller told me I would be going to Istanbul. I just didn't believe it. I thought it was one of my friends putting me on. So I had to say, “Well, who is this? Oh sure: I'm going to Istanbul” and all this kind of thing. I feel I almost talked myself out of the assignment, maybe out of the whole job. Anyway, finally I realized that this was for real. I was asked to come in and see a Miss Blanche, who was the personnel person for all the girls in the Foreign Service. Blanche was her last name, but I don't think I have it quite right. She was the personnel person and she was the one who interviewed me and decided I would be capable, I guess. By now it was February 1944.

Q: I think today, in the 1980s, the term “government girl” just sets people's teeth on edge.

METCALF: It does, it does.

Q: But at the time it didn't. Did it, or didn't it? How did you react to that?

METCALF: For one thing, it was wartime. And the job I held at the Finance Office, for instance, was a job that had been held by a non-commissioned officer at Fort Snelling. Well, all the men are gone, so all the jobs are now held by women. And I think, in a way, that the thrust of my coming to Washington was, again, the idea that women were taking all these jobs. The women had to take them. It was just another ...

Q: Women moving into the work force.

METCALF: Yes. And then, of course, you know what happened; after the war we all left the work force and all the men came back and reclaimed their jobs, in many cases.

Q: And we had the "baby boom."

METCALF: Yes. (pause) But I loved that time in Washington. That's why I really know every corner of this town. Although it's a very long time ago. We're talking about over 40 years.

Q: You said you lived in this neighborhood.

METCALF: It was a boarding house. As I recall, the address was 1821 - 21st Street. Is that near Dupont Circle?

Q: Yes, it is.

METCALF: Perhaps it was 1521, perhaps it was down that far. It's just off P Street, at 21st. There was a wonderful boarding house there.

Q: Now, P Street is all commercial from Dupont Circle almost to Rock Creek Park.

METCALF: It was a line of row houses, and the woman who had this boarding house had arranged so that the common areas were in the building on the corner of 21st and P, and in there was a lovely dining room, her offices, a kind of living room. It was the place where we all gathered. Then, as I remember being told, as houses became available, she would buy them and then turn them into rooming houses, as it were, but they were all part of this boarding house.

She served excellent meals. We turned over ration coupons when we came in. There were tables for four. When you entered there in the morning, there was a toaster on the table. There would be a waitress who asked you if you wanted eggs or cereal, anything hot. And she had her coffeepot and would pour you coffee if you wanted it, and juice. Then

you'd make your own toast at the table. Other boarders would come in, either choose a table that they wanted or come and sit with you. There was a lot of fraternizing. It was very pleasant. Then your hot food would come and you'd finish your breakfast.

I would often walk down Connecticut Avenue to the State Department. I just loved that walk. At that time there were very chic, beautiful shops, and I'd look at all these extravagant clothes. I just loved the walk, the broad sidewalk, and just walking down there.

Q: Were you in the Old Executive Office then?

METCALF: Yes.

Q: Then you did walk right straight down to that building.

METCALF: And I loved that building. And here we were, in wartime, and of course there was “security.” But it was all in a very friendly way. On top of the building were anti-aircraft placements. The streets were full of uniformed men and women. A great deal of Navy, which had the “tempo” buildings that were still there on the Mall. The town was full of young people. At the boarding house, we had dances. It was kind of interesting to talk to everybody else, find out what they were doing, where they were going and all.

Q: It was a mixed boarding house — men and women?

METCALF: Yes. They didn't share rooms but we shared the common areas and we shared houses, they were mixed, too. Whatever room was available, that's the room that you got. Actually, when I first came into town, the friend I mentioned who was in the Finance Office, had gotten a very large room out on Shepherd Street. We could take the bus from the Department almost out to that house, and we shared that room and ate out. Then she was transferred to Managua. Just at that time, a friend who lived out at Arlington Farms, told me that she had heard about this wonderful boarding house off Dupont Circle. Would I be interested in sharing a room with her? Her name was Karen Frankey.

So the two of us went into this boarding house together. Karen rented a car, took all her things out of Arlington Farms, came out and picked me up at this house on Shepherd Avenue, and we moved into our double room in the boarding house. Then Karen was sent off to Madrid. Rather than have a new roommate, since I thought I might be going out fairly soon, I took a single room, in the same house. And carried on life as usual.

Q: So this area was ... It's exciting today, you know, in a different way.

METCALF: It is, it is.

Q: It must have been enormous fun, in spite of wartime. Exciting.

METCALF: Exciting! Partly because there were just so many young people doing their jobs and taking it all very seriously. But at fun times there were young people to be with and talk to. We would have dates to go bowling, to restaurants, to just go down and walk on the Mall, to go down for the cherry blossoms. You did a lot of walking in those days, too. We thought nothing of walking down to the Lincoln Memorial, across Memorial Bridge and up to Arlington house [Lee Mansion]. I loved the Mall area and Memorial Bridge and just the ambiance of the whole thing. It was just exciting.

Q: You met far fewer cars than today, so there was more pleasure walking.

METCALF: There were fewer cars. And when I drew the midnight shift in that code room, I walked down Connecticut Avenue, in the middle of the night, all by myself, or, at one point I had the four to twelve shift, so I was coming home at that hour, and if there wasn't transportation right there. It was still a town of streetcars and buses too but mostly streetcars at that corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 17th Street — I would simply start walking up to Connecticut Avenue, and I really never had any feeling of being afraid; none at all.

Q: And there were all these people on the street?

METCALF: Usually there were people on the street. And I felt it was well lighted. And cars were passing.

Q: As you said earlier, “more innocent times.”

METCALF: Yes. Yes. I was always careful in this respect, that if I were walking at night, just as you're told to do now, you don't daydream, you pay attention to what's around you. But I had no bad experience, and I was never really frightened. And did it every day.

Q: It would be nice to go back to those times today, wouldn't it?

METCALF: Yes, although I must say, I walk these very same streets today now.

Q: We've never walked over to Arlington House [Lee Mansion] but we do walk down to the Smithsonian museums and what have you. That's one of the reasons I enjoy living here, because you have absolute instant access to everything on foot.

METCALF: Absolutely. I love that part of it.

Q: I'm glad you share our enthusiasm for the neighborhood, because that's why we're here.

METCALF: The only time we've lived in the District was when we had an apartment on California Street off Connecticut Avenue for three years, during one of Lee's tours. And we certainly enjoyed that.

Q: So, then you went by convoy, on a troop ship, right?

METCALF: Yes. We went up to New York. I remember that there were 26 of us; Martha isn't sure, but for some reason that number has stuck in my mind. And when I think of the names of the girls, it comes to about 26; if I don't recall the name, I know something about the person and have watched her habits, or whatnot. They put us all in a kind of ballroom,

put cots in a row — I remember there was a great big grand piano in that room — and one day they took us to the Brooklyn Navy Yard. I can't recall the name of the hotel, it was the “Governor Something,” very near the old B&O station.

Anyway, they took us out to the Brooklyn Navy Yard and issued u(she laughs) a helmet and a gas mask. And we had to go through a simulated gas room. I'll never forge(laughing again), the girl beside me, she put that gas mask on and had instant claustrophobia. Her hands and arms were flailing, “I can't stand this, I can't stand this! I can't breathe!” I don't think we were ever subjected to any gas, but we were told that this was the gas room and we did have to go through it. I lost her in that melee but I guess she got through it.

And then, it was only two days later. I'm not certain if we spenmore than two or three nights in the big room — we didn't know where we were going but were put on buses and found ourselves boarding this ship. I think Martha knows exactly where that ship was. It wasn't in the Brooklyn Navy Yard because that was the other adventure. This was the Mauretania. We were told there were 10,000 troops on board. There were also Red Cross women, and nurses.

When we left New York, I carried a letter saying that if we fell into enemy hands, I was to be treated as a second lieutenant.

The trip was fast, and yet it was long, because we went unescorted.

Q: In wartime?

METCALF: Yes. I just heard this, now whether this is accurate ... They decided that they didn't have the escort to use that was needed. The Mauretania was, in those times, a fast ship, and apparently very maneuverable. So it zigzagged all over that North Atlantic. And I'm certain we got almost up to Iceland, because it was awfully cold, just awfullcold. And also you could tell by the sun and other signs. Then we came back down into the Mersey River and docked at Liverpool.

The girls who were assigned to London left us. The rest of us ...

Q: No incidents at sea?

METCALF: (after reflection) Well, we were served two meals per day. Everybody on the ship was on a shift.

Q: No U-boat threats or anything like that?

METCALF: Not really. Oh, there was constant “Alert” and we had what lifeboat practice, at least once or twice a day. Whistles would blow and from wherever we were we would run to our lifeboat station. I think it was at that station we were all women except for one man. I don't know who he was, maybe he was a newspaperman, (laughing) and he said, “God, what chance will I ever have with all these women piling into lifeboats??!” (laughter)

And then we had what they called “panic bags.” We were allowed one suitcase when we boarded. I'll never forget: the gangplank that we went up was way down on the boat, onto an opening two or three decks down; this little gangplank. And we carried our one suitcase. And because it was raining, (laughter) I had an umbrella, a collapsible umbrella. I think maybe they gave us a little bag at some point, our panic bag. And we were supposed to have our K-rations or C-rations in there, and maybe a sweater, whatever it would have been. Anyway, a tiny little bag. So we all lined up at these battle stations and ...

Q: That would go on the lifeboat with you?

METCALF: Yes. And my father had given m(she breaks up in laughter) two beautiful fox furs. He'd gotten them up at Churchill, on Hudson Bay. They were wild foxes, with very long hairs. They were absolutely gorgeous. I loved them so. And you remember how fabulous we thought they were? (Fenzi agrees) So, in my one suitcase, I carried two fox furs. (both laugh)Furthermore, if I were going to the battle station from my stateroom, I always put those fox furs on. Of course, I got rather teased about it — some of the men

asked me, “Are they going to swim?” This kind of thing. But they were warm!That was part of the idea. I thought, “Gee, if I'm up there in that cold, and in that boat,” which looked awfully small to me, “I wouldn't mind having my furs.” They were light. An(laughing again) I loved them anyway.

Q: A marvelous story. So, most of the women got off in London?

METCALF: Oh, no. I would say maybe as many as six. Or maybe only four or five. Then the rest of us went by British lorry into the Midlands. It was something called a repo depot, which was a permanent British installation outside of Lichfield.

Q: A repo depot?

METCALF: That's what it was called during the War. I have this word “Shropshire,” and whether that was the name of that permanent installation or that it was near that county.Lichfield was the nearby big town, where we visited the big cathedral. We were there about a week, just marking time, really, but it gave us a chance to do a little local sightseeing.

Q: Was that your first time in Europe?

METCALF: Yes, it was for me. Some of the other girls had been abroad. One of them, Jean Nelson, one of the four of us assigned to Istanbul; later, she and I went to Romania together. So she and I have remained longtime friends.

I'm trying to remember when we were in the Liverpool railway station. That's where I saw the first American Red Cross girls, with their doughnuts and the whole thin(laughing), very friendly women. In fact, I was, oh, I remember, I was walking in the station with Ethel Martin, who went to Istanbul, too. We were carrying boxes, I can't think why, for we were allowed only one suitcase. (pausing to reflect)I had something, I don't think it was the “panic bag,” it was a box of some kind, Ethel also had one. We were wearing makeup

and rather bright clothes. These British GI's, were they called tommies?, came up to us and said, “Girls, where's the show?” (she laughs) Ethel and I looked at each other. “The show?” Afterwards, we realized, looking around: everything was so drab. Here we were, in our normal, more colorful clothes, wearing makeup. And they thought we were showgirls! From USO or somewhere, just anything. They wouldn't even have realized we were American before we spoke.

One of the women in the Red Cross unit told us that her husband, a newspaperman, was in Istanbul. She asked us to take a note to him, which we did. He was a well-known newspaperman. We boarded the ship, I guess it was called the SS Orion, a British cruise ship from the Pacific that had been put into the war effort as a troop ship. Our ship was part of a very large convoy.As convoys were managed, troop ships were put in the center and all the fast naval ships, I don't know what you call them, these smaller ships protected the large troop ships in the center.

On our ship there were British, Australians, New Zealand and South African troops. What interested us was that we were all thrown together. At the mess we had our own table but we were all in the mess together. By the end of the trip, we found that all our friends were Australians. We had so much more in common with them. Oh, I can't say with each and every, but by and large we got along fine with the Australians and had more fun with them on board. The British, particularly, read. And I like to read but I do not like to read 24 hours a day. There was a wonderful library on board. We all took books out of the library. The British, by and large, took their books, read those books, took them back, got more books, and read books the whole time.

There were little skits given. I remember participating in a kind of what we would call a “talk show” now, I guess. And we walked the decks. Some of those on board managed to have their te(laughing). I don't know quite how they managed that. On this ship, for the first time in my life I ate kippers. As a matter of fact, sometimes when you're verging on being seasick, kippers are rather good.

Q: Oh, really?

METCALF: Yes. They stay down. Maybe they're heavy, or because they're oily? I don't know what it is.

Q: Sounds like it would be just the opposite!

METCALF: I know it does. But I ate the kippers, and I always thought it helped me to manage the seasickness. Because the convoy went slowly, not like a ship in the Atlantic that were zigzagging, you know. And of course in the Mediterranean, you have the rolling. That is what I can't take. I can take the chopping, if I stay up in the air, but the rolling is hard to take. I stayed on deck as much as I could.

As I recall, we were bunked about six of us in a stateroom, and one of the ship's crew looked after our room. I think we made up our own bunks. Bunks had been added to the stateroom; very crude kind of things, really, one on top of the other. There probably was a bunk that belonged in the ship, then they built a bunk on top of it. And then in another corner where there was nothing, they built two bunks. It was more or less like that on the Mauretania, too, but I remember on the Orion more specifically because we were aboard it longer. We were in the first-class section and had a bathroom, which had a tub. It ran salt water; and I suppose the toilet flushed with salt water. Do all ships do that today?

Q: I think they do.

METCALF: The tub was absolutely huge, like a baby swimming pool. This steward would wake us up in the morning. “Rise and shine, rise and shine!” That was pretty early. Not everybody was ready to get up and get out of the rooms. There had been Army nurses on the Mauretania with us, not bunked with us but I was aware they were on the ship. They ended up at the repo depot with us and were sent out from there.

Q: Are we still in 1944?

METCALF: Yes.

Q: Where were those troops going — North Africa?

METCALF: Yes. There were a few British women in uniform on the Orion also. And we sailed to Port Said. After we sailed up the Canal and docked, we saw the American Consulate. The flag was flying, and I remember almost crying — seeing for the first time the American flag on foreign soil. It was a very emotional moment.

We said goodbye to a bunch of our troop friends, our Australian friends. And we took a train to Cairo. It was one of those European-style cars whose doors open sideways and you walk directly in. It was May, by then, and it was hot. We had the windows down, and when the train slowed down at villages of sorts, or hut-ments, there would be any number of vendors, selling bananas, mostly food, sometimes trinkets. But we did overnight at Port Said, staying at an old hotel, three of four of us in one room. The legs of the bedstead sat in little cans of kerosene, and I'm glad they were! (laughter)

A number of the women were accredited to Cairo, some of them were to remain there. Those who were to be in the embassy were immediately taken into town; there were places provided for them to live. Some were to go up to Athens when Greece was freed. Those of us who were to fly out stayed at the airfield. Either then or later it was called Farouk. I think it was American-built; it was certainly American-controlled, and it was our Air Force who were there. We were there for some days.

One of my innocent, very innocent, there — I had been madly in love with “The Desert Song”, the movie, the music, everything; in fact, the only time in my life I ever played hooky from school I did it to go see “The Desert Song” (laughter) with Myrna Loy. Oh, I've had that on my conscience all my life, you know! (laughter) And I walked outside the building where I was billeted and I saw this sand dune over there. I thought, “I want to climb that sand dune.” I started to walk, and the longer I walked, the farther that sand

dune was. I thought that sand dune was, at the most, maybe two blocks away. I'm certain I walked half a mile, or more. Through all that sand! I never got close to that sand dune.

Q: It's that clear dry desert air, isn't it?

METCALF: And nothing to compare with. At that point, no buildings — this was the airport, out on the edge of town, on the desert. And there was this lovely kind of sand dunes that they had in “The Desert Song,” with the ripples.

Q: And you never got there.

METCALF: I was knee-deep in sand by that point and never got there.

We met some very kind American air force officers. At that time I was palling around with Mary Stassen, who was going to Istanbul with me, and who was also from the St. Paul area. These officers took us into town, they always had transportation and we saw quite a lot of Cairo. We went out to the Pyramids and rode on the camels, went to Mena House, did all the things that tourists do. The one young man I knew there was from New Orleans. And we just had a good time, the days that we were all there.

One of the things to do was to have an ice cream at Groppi's, that wonderful ice cream parlor in the middle of Cairo. And they took us to the souk and we bought a few souvenirs. Again, it was partly this spirit of being young, and being ready for anything. That was their attitude, too — let's just have a good time.

Q: Because who knows what tomorrow is going to bring, right?

METCALF: Yes, but not carried to extremes. Having the same kind of good time we would have had if we were in our own hometown. I remembe(she laughs) that this young man said to me, “Doris, I think you wear your clothes too big. Your dresses are too big.” And I said, “No one ever told me that, but I'll tell you the reason for it. Being tall, I always buy one size larger so I get that extra 3/4 of an inch. And I can't take it off.” You know, at that time

I'm 5'8", weighing 125 lbs. But it was amusing to me. What I'd always done was wear belts. I was always belting in my clothe(laughing). I always did. And in those days, by and large, women were shorter and it was difficult to find — in fact, I don't [remember] ever finding a line of clothes really designed for taller women. So he was absolutely right, my clothes were a size too big. (laughter)

Q: But there was nothing you could do about it in Cairo, I don't think, was there?

METCALF: There was nothing I ever did about it. I just belted them in. That was my nook.

Q: Just for the record, what were the names of the three women who went to Istanbul with you?

METCALF: Jean Nelson, Ethel Martin, and Mary Stassen. The way it sort of turned out — well, it happened, really, later, because I kind of teamed up with Mary, as I mentioned, and we met those air force officers and we kind of palled around during that time.

Then the day came when we flew to Adana, in southern Turkey, the four of us. We stayed there several days. I think I can say, it probably was an OSS operation; I don't really know; it must have been, because I don't know what we'd have been doing there.

There were at least four other girls who were assigned to Ankara, so I believe there were eight of us in Adana, put up in a large accommodating house. Then we went by train to Ankara. You go through that famous pass through the Taurus Mountains, the Cilician Gates. I don't recall changing trains, although we may have. I don't remember seeing anything of Ankara at that time. I think we just let off those girls.

The thing you asked me about earlier: in a convoy, as we went through the Gibraltar straits, it was night-time, and a tender did come out and pick up one of the girls named Jaqueline. I don't remember her maiden name; I think she later married McBride and she was Jaqueline McBride. The convoy never stopped, we were going that slowly. And

of course you could see no lights; everything was blacked out on both shores. It was absolutely a black Mediterranean.

In the daytime it was gorgeous. The sun was shining. You'd have thought you were on a holiday vacation, with that kind of weather. And then, as you looked around, all this equipment, destroyers and whatever.

Q: Was there any air activity?

METCALF: Yes. It was during that time that we were on deck, most of us, and suddenly all the military people tensed up, the gunners moved into position, everything started to move and turn. And there were Nazi reconnaissance planes overhead. They were very high. I remember I was with one of the Australians at the time and I looked up and there were, maybe, three planes. I said, “How do you know those are Nazi planes?” And he said, “Well, you know the keys of your typewriter, don't you?” (she laughs) So it was of course by the configuration. They were obviously just looking over the convoy. I think at that time it must have been that they didn't have the wherewithal to attack, to send back the message to attack. Because the convoy ahead of ours had been attacked. But, I suppose, it was the beginning of the wind-down of the power; we were never attacked.

From Ankara, we — this was the Orient Express — maybe we did change trains, because that train would have gone to Baghdad; we wouldn't have gone south. We had sleepers. Then there were the four of us, bound for Istanbul. One of the things I remember about that trai(she laughs) is the gorgeous white, heavy linen, everything plush, and full of bedbugs. I was bitten to pieces on the Orient Express. But it looked so luxurious; and it was. It was sort of fun in the dining room. The service was good. This was our first exposure to Turkey, really, in the train dining room.

The depot is on the Asian side of the Bosporus. So we got out of the train there and into the terminal. There was a kavass to meet us and he took us over to the ferry boat depot, where we took the ferry across to Stamboul, the “old city.” I think an office car picked

us up there and took us to the Consulate General, as it was now, since Ankara became the capital and we had an embassy there. The Consulate General was in a beautiful old house.

You ask me what a kavass is. It's a Turkish word, standing for a sort of combination messenger, herald, announcer of rank concierge — an employee with a certain status. In the Ottoman days, when the Ambassador went out, he was always preceded by a kavass, a Turk in impressive costume, carrying a staff which he stomped repeatedly on the ground to announce the emissary's approach. He had, by now, mostly a ceremonial function. And he could be very helpful, he had all the answers.

Q: Was Miss Betty Clark still there when you ... ?

METCALF: She had just gone. She was an institution in Istanbul.

Q: This is where I met my boss, Burton Berry. It was he who took Jean and me up to Bucharest. I've always been devoted to him. He died just a couple of years ago in Zurich, but we stayed in touch all these years.

METCALF: I didn't really know what work Ethel Martin was equipped to do. What I didn't know was that she didn't type, and that she also had bookkeeping/accounting experience. So when Mr. Berry interviewed me. I think it just happened that I was the first one interviewed — I told him what I had been doing in the Finance Office. I fully expected that I would be in the accounting office in Istanbul. Of course, I did type, and I could take a bit of shorthand. The question he asked me just absolutely infuriated me and I was to remind him of it later on.

He asked me if I had “come for the ride.”

Q: Oh, really? What poor management technique!

METCALF:I think he wasn't used to dealing with women, Foreign Service women. I think there had been very few, maybe none that he had ever dealt with; maybe they had always been young men. And all of a sudden, you see, here are four girls. This was really a staging area. We expected to go up into the Balkans and it would depend on which countries capitulated first. Lee Metcalf, whom I married later, was working with Yugoslav Affairs. One of the other officers was working with Bulgarian affairs. And someone with Romanian affairs.

And as you know, this was a listening post. So, depending on how the War went, we would be transferred on out and up. And the way it did go, Romania capitulated first. And Burton Berry was made a sort of Officer-in-Charge with personal rank of Minister at the U.S. Mission in Bucharest. Jean and I were then scheduled to go there with him. In Istanbul, again, here you are in a country that was called, I believe, a “non-bellig” ...

At first, we four girls had a suite in the Park Hotel in an area called Ayas Pasha. From our room and our balcony we had a view of the Bosporus. Again, here's this gorgeous city, with its skyline of mosques. And you remember, I had wanted to come here in the first place! I was so in love with that city, I could have stayed there the rest of my life. I simply loved that city. And, again, there were American men, out of uniform; I suppose they were OSS, with whom we got acquainted. There were these unmarried men in our consulate. There was an OWI operation. So there were plenty of men and dates and fun.

Q: OWI was the Office of War Information, of USIS?

METCALF: Yes, it was. Interesting people. One of the women, the American woman in OWI, was Eleanor Kerns, who later married New York Times correspondent Sam Brewer and who were in Beirut later.It was there they met the British spy who recently died in Russia, Kim Philby. She later married Kim Philby. So I've always watched Eleanor's career.

Q: Did she go to Moscow with Philby?

METCALF: No, I don't think she ever did. She's been dead quite a long time now. I think she died in Beirut. A lovely girl, really, and very capable. I think she had rather responsible jobs at OWI. And it was in OWI where this newspaperman whose name I can't bring up yet, to whom we delivered the note from this Red Cross worker in Liverpool.

We visited all the mosques and walked the Old City. And, again, Istanbul was not this giant of a city that it is today. You could walk everywhere or take a streetcar. The word for “stuffed” in Turkish is dolma. Stuffed vine leaves are called dolma. When the cars were full, they'd put out a sign “dolmas.” (laughter) And they were mostly stuffed. We almost could get where we were going faster by walking. And we took taxicabs, which were everywhere. There weren't many private cars, I imagine. At that time the really old covered bazaar of Istanbul was there, before the fire. The jewels, the silver, the gold, the chalices; there was a treasure trove in every shop. In fact, Lee bought my engagement ring, a ruby, in one of those shops. We didn't bargain very successfully, though. (she laughs) We made the prime mistake.

Q: Well, you weren't accustomed to it.

METCALF: No. What happened, was — these pigeonblood rubies, called cabochons — he brought out a ring that had the most gorgeous stone in it, and gave us a price. Lee wanted me to be along to pick out the ring. It was a gorgeous, really true ruby red pigeonblood, and it had a nice star in it; it was lovely. And we almost chose that. And then this ma(she laughs) brought out another ring. And I fell in love with the mounting. I still like this mounting. I've never seen a ring with this kind of mounting. It's like a little crown, with diamonds in that.

He saw my eyes light up. And this is the one I chose. Only too late I realized: this stone is not the beautiful pigeonblood that the first one was. This doesn't have a perfect star, and it

has a fla(laughter). I fell for the mounting. But he was such a clever businessman, he knew that was the ring we were going to buy. Still, this should have cost much less because of the value of the stone wasn't there. But he gave us the same price! (laughter) I will say it was a good lesson. I learned early on to play poker every time I went into a bazaar.

Q: Could I back up just a minute? When Mr. Berry asked you if you had just come along for the ride, what did you respond to him?

METCALF: What I remember saying to him is, “Mr. Berry, (laughing) I have just been on the high seas, in war conditions, for six weeks. I don't think I've come just for the ride. And furthermore, I'm planning to stay.” And of course, because we've kept up our friendship all these years, any number of times I've written him, “Still here. Still writing.”

Q: Good for you.

METCALF: Maybe he handled the other girls a little differently. I think maybe he did!

Q: You probably set the tone for it.

METCALF: I actually loved working for him. I didn't work for him, really, in Istanbul, I worked for some of the other officers. But he did, as I mentioned, take Jean and me to Istanbul. And because Bulgaria hadn't capitulated yet, to get to Romania we flew to Cairo. (she pauses for some moments to reflect) what kind of plane could that have been? I'm wondering if we took a commercial flight. Maybe this was in a commercial plane. But there was a dog on board, right in with the passengers. And this dog belonged to a South American diplomat who was on board. There was a man, an airline employee, the dog was tethered, who had a gun and it was understood. They didn't know what to expect of the dog, very large one. And it was the understanding that if that dog started any trouble, he was going to shoot the dog. When I think of having a gun in a plane compartment, but I remember it very well. And the dog, it was as if he knew what was going on. I've never seen a better behaved dog. He just sat there.

We didn't fly directly to Cairo, we flew to Palestine. And it was during that part in Palestine, in whatever that plane was, that this incident took place, I think. Whether we flew from Ankara to Palestine, and then to Cairo, and then to Naples. And again we spent several days in Cairo waiting for a CAF C-47 American Army [cargo] plane to take us to Naples.

We spent several days there. There was still fighting in northern Italy, not in Rome of course, which had been an “open city” all during the war. We asked Burton Berry if we could hitch a ride up to Rome, would it be all right with him if we went up to Rome for two or three days? Because we'd been told that there wouldn't be a flight out of Naples for seven days. And we had done a number of things there. The opera was already going again, we went to the San Carlos Opera, I remember we saw “Aida.” Which was, again, exciting, because we had just come from Cairo. Jean and I were in a hotel, the Park, as I remember, on the Corniche and we could look out over the Mediterranean. From our balcony we had a very good view of Mt. Vesuvius. Not long before that, the mountain had blown up and lost its top, so it didn't have its beautiful configuration any longer.

We literally thumbed a ride. I don't know if we got into some kind of carryall or what we did, on the way up. On the way back down, we thumbed a ride from the hotel we were in. I mean, we talked to people, we weren't standing outside in the road, with a high-ranking American Army officer who had his own jeep. He was coming back down to Naples. We sat on all his dufflebags. We did quite a lot of sightseeing in Rome, you know, the usual Hippodrome, the Forum, etc.

Q: This must be '45?

METCALF: No, this is '44. I stayed in Istanbul only about five months, and then because of Bulgaria, we couldn't go directly ...

Q: You had to do it roundabout.

METCALF: Yes. And also Athens; Greece wasn't free yet. During the time that we were in Naples, perhaps we were there as long as ten days or two weeks, the State Department had an operation at Caserta, in a big palace. I remember going up there to get some food rations, maybe some candy; Jean and I went up. And we took a tour of Caserta. That was the most beautiful palace, with all the gardens, and though the fountains weren't playing, you could visualize what it must look like.Then finally the plane for Bucharest was set up. There were Burton Berry, Jean and I, and another man, an American of Romanian background, who joined us. I don't know how he got there but he was in Naples, and he was looking for a way up there. This was one of those CAF planes with bucket seats. Greece was now free, so the first leg of the flight was to Athens. We had a kind of hotshot pilot who insisted on going around the Acropolis so we could all see it. (she laughs) My first view of the Acropolis was as though we were in a helicopter ...

Q: A very close bird's eye view.

METCALF: Too close. We came down in an air field on the coast. Perhaps we just gassed up; I think so. I don't remember staying overnight then; I did later. So, we gassed up, and this hotshot pilot tested the altimeter over the Aegean and forgot to bring in the radio antenna. And going down, he lost the antenna, so we had no radio. As we were going over Bulgaria, which we thought was still enemy territory, though the war had wound way down, one of our engines froze, and we had to land.

So our hotshot pilot is looking for a place to land.

Q: With no radio.

METCALF: With no radio, yes. We came down on a military field in Starz Zagora. And when we came out of that plane, here were these military officers lined up. They had a dagger in their belt, an(she breaks up laughing), because the pilot wasn't able to radio in to the field. Then everything relaxed, some men came forward.

One of the things I didn't mention about Istanbul. We visited in the hospital and entertained in our apartment. When we left the Park Hotel, four of us had an apartment, the apartment, again in Ayas Pasha. And we entertained American POWs who had been sent out of Bulgaria by train. If you remember, we bombed the Ploesti Oilfields. These men had been on those flights, who came down in Bulgaria and were POWs in Bulgaria for the rest of the war. Then the Bulgarians began to let them out. Some of them needed to be in hospitals, and we were told that they were there and went to see them. We entertained some of them. They were all wearing POW clothes, horrible, baggy, dark. Some of them had been POWs quite a long time.

Anyway, here we are, coming down in Bulgaria, and we (laughing) aren't bringing them POWs. But unknown to us, Bulgaria had capitulated. So, once we all got acquainted, those officers invited us in for dinner, and we found out later, food was scarce, that they gave us their dinner that evening, which was a kind of soup.

We were billeted in the town overnight. We were scattered. Jean and I were together, and we were taken to a Bulgarian household. It wasn't a farm but it was somewhat rural. It was a big town, I suppose, in terms of Bulgarian towns, but it had a rural aspect — mud streets in places, and I don't recall any “downtown,” perhaps there was one.This was a two-story house. And when we came down for breakfast, on the landing there was a table set up with a single place setting. We asked what that was. How we communicated with these people, I knew a little German, Jean knew some, they knew some, and they told us that that was where the Russian officer ate. So there was a Russian officer billeted in the house, too. We went down, into the kitchen, and they set out their best table. There was one egg, there were maybe several pieces of bread but a slice of bread had been cut in three or four pieces. There was a littl(laughing) — I really don't know what some of that [food] was. And the tea wasn't “tea,” it was a beverage made from some dried grain, but it was hot. The Russian officer came in. He wasn't about to sit up on that landing all by himself, he wanted to see what was going on down below. A handsome young man,

in Russian uniform; very intense. He looked at us, he asked our host and hostess to translate. He spoke to them in Russian, which they could handle through their Bulgarian. The first question he asked was how old were we? (both laugh)

I said I was 23; I think I was 24 by then. He said he was 23. And he wanted to know what the heck we were doing there. (laughter) It was kind of hard to explain, we weren't sure ourselves. Anyway, it was a good thing that this was a military airport, because they were able to get the plane back into running shape. Meanwhile, over in Bucharest, those people were waiting for us. They were our military OSS people, and maybe the beginnings of the Allied Control Commission, military people who had begun to move in there. All they knew was that we had touched down in Athens, gassed up, and then where were we? They really thought perhaps we'd dug into the Carpathians, because there was no trace. I'm not certain they had been able to fix the radio, I don't remember, I don't really think so. I think we just landed at that airport because Captain White knew where the airport was, and so we had landed at the airport.

There were two officers in our mission there already, Roy Melbourne and Charles Hulick. They came out to the airport in a car and picked up their new bos(laughing) and all the rest of us. And that's where we met; they're our lifetime friends. It's the Hulicks who live up in Hancock, and that's when I see Elsie and Cecil Lyons when we go up to visit the Hulicks and the Melbournes. Charles was married but Sonny was not at the post, of course, and Roy wasn't married yet. So we drove into the mission and set up business.

Q: Now, was Lee still in Istanbul?

METCALF: Yes. He had been working with Yugoslav Affairs, and he thought he would probably be going to Yugoslavia. But Yugoslavia didn't fall all that quickly; we still were not in control there. So he was assigned up to Bucharest in March, 1945, because we needed people up there too, so he came up there. In fact, they sent a military airplane, attached,

probably to the OSS, which had transportation. It went down and picked up my baggage. I had a trunk that had arrived in Istanbul before I left but I couldn't do anything about it.

Q: How in the world had the trunk got there?

METCALF: I don't know. How did it get there? Jean had a trunk, too. We each had a trunk. What the Allies expected to happen was that as shipping would begin out of the Bosporus and up into the Black Sea, they could put those two trunks on the ship and we would go down to Constanze and pick them up. (laughing) You know, there again: when I think of it now, if someone were tell me that now, I'd think, “Wait and see!” But I believed absolutely [that] a ship would come along, they'd put my trunk aboard, because in those days, when people told you something, that's the way it happened. Everyone tried to make it happen that way.

Q: If they said they were going to do it, they did it.

METCALF: They did it.

Q: If at all humanly possible.

METCALF: If it could have happened. So, I thought, “That's where my trunk will arrive, at Constanze. So we'll go down to Constanze and pick up the trunks.” Meanwhile, we're in Bucharest and it is the beginning of the Allied Control Commission, made up of the Russians, the British, ourselves, is that all? Just the three powers. Then General Courtland van Rensselaer Schuyler, New York, Dutch of course, arrived some little time later, and he was head of the military part of the Allied Control Commission. We've stayed in touch with him too, sporadically. Burton Berry was head of the civilian element.

Q: So you were in Bucharest for two years or longer?

METCALF: Well, this could be off the record. It was darn cold there, you know, there wasn't any fuel. I can't recall that the office had any heat; maybe it had a little. And very

foolishly, I didn't have my winter coat with me, and thinking that my trunk was going to come and I'd get my winter coat, the trunks having arrived before we left Istanbul and I knowing my coat was included, I was reluctant to spend money to buy a coat. “Any day” I thought my ship was going to come in to Constanze. It was cold in the office, though we had some little portable heaters of some kind. And it was desperately cold at the hotel. Jean and I had a sort of two-room suite there, a room and a little sitting room and a bathroom and small dressing room. We ate some of our meals in our sitting room and others in the hotel dining room.

It was just plan cold. I caught a cold. Actually I think I caught it in the hotel in Naples, which was also cold. That's the thing I do remember about this trip. Once we left Cairo, everything was cold. It was that early spring cold damp cold and I couldn't get rid of this cold. I finally knew that I was really ill. I wasn't in the office for a few days, and the American doctor who had come through to see some POWs came to see me. I suppose the thing hadn't progressed far enough for him to give me a really good diagnosis, because it was some weeks later, even a couple of months, that another American doctor came through and he said, “I think you should get home right away.”

I was seeing a Romanian doctor and I had some X-rays taken, and I was having a great deal of pain. The path of the pain was such that the Romanian doctor diagnosed that I had a gall bladder problem, which surprised me because I didn't eat rich foods ever, and I was thin, and so on. But he seemed so sure of it that the American doctor said, “You had better get home.” So by this time the military had a number of planes, and one was more or less assigned to the political mission, as it were.

Just as an aside, the pilot was Emmons, who had been a Doolittle pilot who had been shot down and a prisoner in Russia for about a year and a half. During that time he spent his time learning Russian. Some long time later, when Ana Pauker was Foreign Minister, we were at a party and Ana Pauker commented on Emmons' Russian. She asked him where he had learned it. So he told her. “In Russia when I was a prisoner!”

Anyway, he flew the plane and took me and some other business that had to be done out to Naples. I went into an Army hospital there and spent maybe a week. See, they really had not diagnosed me, but I found that there were GIs who had similar symptoms. And then the moment came when those of us who were then considered contagious were put in an ambulance. There were six litters, five GIs beside myself in the ambulance, and were taken to a hospital ship, the Seminole. I spent two weeks on the hospital ship going from the port of Naples to Charleston, South Carolina. There they diagnosed that I had a pleural effusion, all this fluid in my lungs. Then I began to be treated as though I was a tuberculous suspect.

There were other GIs in exactly the same condition, and in the hospital in Charleston in my ward there was a WAC who had the same thing. And, again, I suppose it had something to do with all of us having been so cold and losing our immunity and coming down with this, whether it was a bug or whether I was actually flirting with tuberculosis, whether we all were, has really never been explained.

Then I went by hospital train. I know I spent V-J Day in that hospital in Charleston.

Q: Of course, we didn't have antibiotics.

METCALF: We had sulfa, but that was for open wounds and that kind of thing. There was a little bit of penicillin, used very carefully and very specifically. In fact, at that point they didn't really know what penicillin might be able to [do]. I certainly was never given any. But at the hospital, as I mentioned, a WAC had the same condition. She had picked it up in Italy and Paris and had come in on the hospital ship. I think I had a cabin to myself on this ship, which had been built to ply inland waters and it was very narrow. And thereb(laughing) very prone to make us seasick.

I was seasick most of that trip, but I had a very nice steward looking after me, an American GI who had responsibility for that part of the ship. The day before we docked, he said,

“Would you like me to wash and set your hair?” And I said, “Oh, can you do that?” “Yes,” he said, “I'm a hairdresser.”Q: Oh, for Heaven's sake.

METCALF: “If you ever get to Chicago, my shop is at l2345 Parnell Avenue.” (laughter) So he shampooed my hair and set it and I looked like a human being again when I left that ship.

Of course, that's an interesting harbor there. You have Fort Sumter, for instance. I think I shall always remember the over-all American efficiency. That hospital back in Naples; that hospital ship; the Charleston hospital, just the best doctors, the best of every kind of help, just efficiency plus.

Then I was to be transferred to Galesburg, Illinois. The Charleston hospital was a receiving hospital for ships coming in from overseas. Soon they created a hospital train that simply started in Charleston and ran to Galesburg, while all other trains on the line stopped and we kept going. I had a sleeping berth. Every time I looked out the window, it seemed, we were in another State. We just followed a diagonal, as the tracks were laid, and went to Galesburg.

Up there I had an excellent doctor who had by then, I think, a full understanding of what the condition was. He had seen it. Also I had “progressed” enough so that I was full of this fluid, which they tapped, analyzed it, and gave it to guinea pigs to see if they would come down with TB. They did this over a period of time, the guinea pigs didn't, but I had picked up some bug which had settled in the lining of the lung. So then I went, finally, home to St. Paul and just rested in my parents' home. I wasn't over it yet, I saw a man in St. Paul and I still had fluid. But breathing was easier.

You know, tuberculosis was still such a scourge. My condition watreated as if I had TB because they knew no other way to treat me. I had to lie down, I had to stay in bed. I was

told not even to raise my arm up over my head. When you did that, you were using lung power. You were to do nothing that in any way made you use lung power.

I stayed in St. Paul until Lee had home leave orders. He had been overseas five years by that time — he had gone abroad before we entered the War, and he was assigned to Budapest, later as diplomats, he was non-diplomatic at that time, were brought to Lisbon and either brought home or reassigned; he was assigned to Istanbul. He spent the rest of the War there, and that's how I happened to meet him. So, after five years overseas, he came to St. Paul to meet my parents. Lee and I had planned to be married in Istanbul, and then when I got my orders to go to Romania, we decided there was no point in that, we'll wait and see what happens next. Very probably he would go to Yugoslavia and I would join him there; something like that.

Well, instead, he came to St. Paul and persuaded me to go down to El Paso, his home, with him, because winter was coming on in Minnesota — it was now about November — and he said, “Why not come to El Paso, meet my parents, there's sunshine down there, you can lie out in the back yard.” So I did. We were married there in January. I was feeling better and better, getting my strength back, and we came to Washington. (end of tape)Q: Did you have a medical discharge or did you have to resign because you married?

METCALF: That is all a bit hazy. It wasn't a medical discharge. And this was another thing: Burton Berry just assumed that because we would be getting married, I would leave the office, it was just kind of a big assumption. And I kind of went along with it. You know, we were all programmed like that. Then with my having to leave because I was ill, I traveled without, it seems to me, per diem, because I was being cared for by military planes and installations all along the way. I think I have my discharge papers and I'd be curious to look up the date, I don't recall, but I mean all of a sudden I wasn't “in.” Maybe it happened while I was en route?

Q: Do look them up so we can see when you were officially cut loose.

METCALF: All right. I know that later I did try to claim some per diem. I forget now exactly how that was settled; perhaps it covered a couple of days or something.

So then Lee and I tried to go back to Bucharest. The way it worked out, we came to Washington. By that time it was very hot summer and I wasn't quite ready for it; I was not feeling well. By that I mean I was just feeling so weak, not myself, and wondering, “Am I going to come down with this thing again? Maybe I'd better not go back to Bucharest quite yet.” So Lee went on, arriving back there in June, while I returned to St. Paul, staying there until October. By then I was feeling perfectly fine. I took a ship out of New York. It was carrying people who hadn't been able to get back to Europe. I met some young FSOs going to their first posts, there were a few businessmen, many Europeans. It was a whole shipful of people.

I met a woman who had been away from Poland for nine years. She was one of those, there were so many in Eastern Europe, whose parents had come to the States to make a stake and return to Poland and buy themselves a farm. This girl was born while they lived here, so she was an American citizen but grew up in Poland. She married. She had just had a child in 1937. She came to the U.S., and as an American she would get a job, she had an aunt here, then send for her husband and the new baby and they'd make their new life here.

Of course, Hitler marched into Poland in '39 and she was caught here. She had not seen her child or her husband for nine years. She was on her way back to Poland and we struck up a friendship. The last I saw her, we shared a room in that lovely old hotel next to the embassy in Paris, the Crillon, and I tried to help her, some aid at the embassy, help with her transportation and such, because I was there for some days before I could get a plane.

Again, it was a military plane, I think, that took me to Vienna; another plane from there to Bucharest. I know I was there by Thanksgiving, 1946. Anyway, I've always wondered what happened to the young Polish woman, I suppose that she and her husband and child did

come to the States. But imagine having left a baby and then the next time you see your child is nine years later.

Q: Just amazing. So, you could never work again as ...

METCALF: I never did. Frankly, I was guarding my health somewhat, but later, because they were always short of help I was “invited” back, as it were. At that point I decided I wouldn't. Things were normalizing, people were coming in, and so on. Sometimes I sort of wish I had gone back to work, but the real reason at that point was my health. I just sort of took it easy and took the time to learn French, and Romanian; I just didn't push it. No need to.

Q: At that point, were you aware of the changes that were taking place in the diplomatic corps? For one thing, the Foreign Service Act of 1946. I'm not quite sure what the implications of that were for women, but whereas before, the embassies had been small — you mentioned this earlier; times were simpler all over, the Service had been small, everyone knew one another. Suddenly it's post-war and we're bringing AID and there was an egalitarian — I think that Act was to make the Foreign Service more egalitarian. And then “Wristonization” — were you aware of the changes that were taking place?

METCALF: Well, nothing really happened in Bucharest. We left in May, 1948. Don Dunham came to open up a USIS office (then called something else) and an Agricultural Attach# arrived. Otherwise, there weren't any perceptible changes.

Q: Did you suddenly find yourself in hats and gloves and calling cards and teas? Were you thrust into a ...

METCALF: Somewhat, because Romanian “society” was still there. As the Iron Curtain came down, they began to leave. I sometimes thought that we were there too long, in that we did make Romanian friends and we saw them disappear. They went all over, they went to Paris. These were people with money who had connections and in some cases had

money placed. The house that Lee and I lived in was owned by Savel Radulescu, who was political adviser to King Michael. It was a lovely big old Romanian-style home. Romanian architecture is very individual. I can spot it anywhere. Later when we were stationed in Athens and visited one of our officers, I said, “You're living in a Romanian house!” And he said, “Yes, it was built by a Romanian Ambassador at such-and-such a time.” It's the use of arches, and a certain style of porches, somewhat Moorish. More of a Roman arch than Moorish, however, but with an oriental feel.

I loved that house. The ceilings about fifteen feet high, and lovely big rooms. What the owner had done, partly to save the house so that he could live in it, because by now the Russians were confiscating houses of the wealthy, housing troops in them — Russian officers lived in a house across the street from us, a family upstairs and downstairs, there were Soviet army officers all over the place.

Radulescu was a very good friend of King Carol and Mme. Lupescu, and the house was filled with mementoes of their friendship, pictures, etc. Quite frankly, I've been sorry that I didn't take out those pictures, they were fabulous. The Russians later took over the house and everything in it. Lupescu was the King's longtime mistress. Queen Helen was his wife, but the whole world knew he had this longtime liaison with Magda Lupescu.

Romanian society (not the ordinary people) at that time, everybody married three times. Women married usually some older man. It was a very, to me, it seemed decadent then. I suppose now, as I look around the world, everybody's living like this. But the women are absolutely gorgeous, the most beautiful women, those society women. Because of the migrations of peoples that crossed Romania, you would have women with coal-blue-black hair and white skin and blue eyes, or brown eyes. And you'd have someone who was blond, perhaps helped along a bit, but still blond, and brown-eyed. Beautiful tans. I thought the women were absolutely gorgeous. The men, by comparison were not: they were effeminate, by and large.

I'm speaking of “the society.” Believe me, Romania had a society. These people owned villages. They talked about “my village.” It was feudal. And that's why, when the Curtain came down, we were in an ambiguous position, the same thing we face now in Central America: “the 400 family” idea. “Why do you want those families to come back and retake their villages?” On the other hand, you don't want the Communists. That was the dichotomy of politics there, but it was also part of our daily life. We were associating with these people, they were still in the Foreign Office, in one case a newspaperman still had his newspaper. We knew his family very well. And Savel was a friend. Lee and I had our apartment upstairs, Savel lived downstairs, and the kitchen being down in the basement, we sort of “shared” his servants, his marvelous old-time retainers. Here we are, a Third Secretary and his wife, and we have a butle(both laughing) and a maid.

Q: Wonderful!

METCALF: And we have a cook.

Q: Wonderful!

METCALF: And somebody else is looking out after them. We paid them of course. (laughter)

Q: Did he direct them?

METCALF: Not really. They knew what to do, it was their house, they'd been living in it for years. I never took any Romanian language lessons and I'd had very little Latin, but Romanian is an easy language to learn. It's a “small language,” it hasn't very many words. I must have spoken it badly, really, but well enough so Romanians would say, “You speak Romanian with a brush-off accent.” What they were really telling me was that I was speaking servanting.

Q: And that probably amused them, really.

METCALF: But it was a fun language. Several years before, when Jean and I were staying in the hotel, we loved that language. We remember when we stepped into the elevator for the first time, and this cute young man asked, “Pofdits?” Meaning “where are you going” or “please,” it's a word that takes care of a lot. If you know only one word of the language, that's the one you want to know. It's a fun language. I really enjoyed trying to use it.

Q: So how did you occupy your time there, then?

METCALF: Well, there were teas, social life still went on. Social life still went on. The elite Romanians thought that somehow we were going to save them from their plight. The Curtain came down slowly. Soon, the newspaperman didn't have his newspaperman. Soon, [the brewer owner] didn't have his beer company. And soon the names in the Foreign Office changed. It was gradual. And what I started to say about Savel further back, King Michael was forced out in December, 1947. The flags came down over the palace and a train took out his retinue. Savel was not allowed to go, they wouldn't take him on the train.

One night, I can't place it in time exactly, probably early in 1948, January or February, there was a terrible knock at the door, not a knock, pounding, pounding, shouting. Of course Lee and I were wakened and we thought they'd come for Savel. They had. There was enough light so that when we heard the commotion and voices downstairs, we went out on our balcony and saw him led off, put into a jeep and taken away. Of course, we and everybody else never saw him again. He was taken to the USSR and from time to time there would be stories coming back that someone had seen him. A story came back that someone had seen him walking on the streets, by that time having no shoes, his feet bound in cloth. Possibly it was a case omistaken identity, but I doubt it. The person who told us this would have recognized him. The informant was someone who'd also been sent to the USSR and was later let out to return to Romania.

It was rather interesting that this elite group, I don't know what else to call them, this society. They were the educated people, they were the people running the country even if they ran it like a feudal country, still they were in charge. Going “abroad” to them meant going to Paris. Often when they spoke to each other they spoke French. This marked them to themselves, especially among the young men, as being a “boulevardiste”. But in truth, there are many things one might wish to discuss but which you can't really discuss easily in Romanian! It's a very “poor” language. So if you've learned about many matters in French, it's logical. I was more tolerant when I understood that. At first I'd think, “Why don't they speak Romanian?”

Q: Well, we're only about halfway through your career.

METCALF: Something comes to mind, this is early on, again, when Jean and I were living at the hotel in Bucharest, you see we and the Soviets were still allies. So relations with them were very friendly. And when we ate in that lovely dining room, there were all these Russian officers and there was music being played, so finally, well, not so finally, they came to our table and asked us to dance. So we did. Again, speaking German, we got somewhat acquainted with those who ...

Some of them were billeted at the hotel too, yes. And on this one night we were all having dinner together and Jean and I were asking about the various officers, “Where is he from?” This one was from Riga, this one from another Baltic state, this one from a place somewhere in the south. It could have been the Ukraine. And then there was a cute one with a big smile. He was Mihai. “And where is Mihai from?” Do you know what the others said? “Moscow!” He was actually the only Russian among us. It just came out, how they felt, they were Soviets. (laughter)

Q: As the Iron Curtain slowly lowered, did the Romanians express any resentment against you, say, because you were American and they were expecting we would bail them out?

METCALF: Oh, yes. At the same time, they had to remember that they fought in that war with the Germans, against us. They did remember it, too. If there's one thing I could say about Romanians, it's that they're a very realistic, pragmatic people. Again, I'm speaking of the educated elite. Although they were distressed with us, I think they couldn't “blame” us too much, either. And they saw the way the whole of Eastern Europe was going, it wasn't just Romania. Czechoslovakia went later. Bulgaria, of course, was always more closely associated with Russia because they were closer ethnically. Moldavia province in Romania has gone back and forth between Russia and Romania through history.

Q: You mentioned the peoples that have overrun it. It is true that they're geographically located so that the hordes went back and forth as they went east and west, maybe they were, as you say, very pragmatic — “Well, what next?”

METCALF: And you do mean “hordes.” Genghis Khan; and then they were part of the Byzantine Empire; then they were under the Turks for 350 years. One of the things that came to my mind, when I mentioned that these people were leaving the country and they managed to take money outside, etc., there were some who chose to stay. I had been taking, with some other people in our (by then) Legation, this is much, much later, and Rudolph Schoenfeld came in as our first Minister, at the end of the War, under the Allied Control Commission which was there until the War ended and slightly thereafter, I suppose, until things got tied up and put together again.

It was after that time that I started to take Romanian dancing lessons with Bob and Mary Cleveland and others. The man giving the lessons was from a phanariot Greek family. These are the Greek families that the Turks used to place in the Balkans to be the tax collectors, to do all the work. There's one thing about the Turks, they early on understood their limitations and what they wanted. They put other people to work for them. These Phanariot families were to me a very interesting group of people. They considered

themselves more Romanian than the Romanians but they still knew their Greek language. And of course, the Orthodox church is in Romania, and I guess also the Greek Orthodox.

This man's name was Teddy Chrisafaloni and he opted to stay. Now whether Teddy did stay on, I don't know, but at the time that we left, he was still there, and he was there quite a while later. His answer was: “The reason I'm staying is, somebody has to stay.” And you know, with things finally beginning to make a change a little bit, maybe some of the Chrisafalonis are there; I don't know. Somebody does have to stay, I guess. But his was a landed family, and of course they lost all their land, they lost their wealth. I don't know what he would have been doing for a job. He taught us dancing just as a hobby, because he liked to dance and liked the Romanian dances. He liked thinking of the costumes, and he liked the peasant dances, he'd learned them, all of that. Again, see, he was thinking historically, I suppose, passing all this on. You don't give it up, you pass it on.

I think some people have a much better sense of history than others. I think he had that. A very attractive young man.

Q: Could I skip way ahead? There are a couple of things I did want to ask you. One is: In 1971 or '72, when you were on the AAFSW Board, during all those discussions about the 1972 Directive. Because one of the focal points, really, of our project is the change in the profile of the Foreign Service spouse with the '72 Directive. It probably had the most profound effect on our attitudes and what we did than anything else, really. I think World War II played a big role.

METCALF: It did.

Q: Because it democratized the Service.

METCALF: What I have always seen, as to what happened in the Service, is really just a reflection of what happened in society.

Q: Yes. That's exactly what we've documented in that chart I showed you, really. It just happened that way. So, it's something that had to come.

METCALF: This is an off-the-record thing. When I was back in the Finance Office, we had an efficiency expert who came out from Washington. You see, what had started out as a small finance office to take care of little Fort Snelling and then the Savage, Minnesota Japanese language school, then we had a munitions factory and it all kept getting bigger and bigger. Finally, we had this huge finance office that we actually had to move out of Fort Snelling; we took over a whole floor in a great big office building in downtown St. Paul, the Minnesota Building.

This efficiency expert came after we had become quite big, with a huge payroll for the munitions plant, officers' payroll, enlisted men's payroll, etc. He interviewed me, sat at my desk, saw what I was doing. My job was kind of threefold: I ran a bookkeeping machine over here, a monster of a thing; I audited these vouchers; I sort of had a liaison with somebody else in the department. We kept track of over-all sums of money, how many vouchers passed through, internal matters, you might say. Well, when the efficiency expert had finished with our office, he had divided my job in half, and they gave the auditing part of my job to a young man in the office, a 4F, not able to enter the service, with a two-grade increase in salary. And I had my machine and my liaison with this woman.

You know, I accepted that; we all just kind of accepted it. But I think in the back of my mind, I didn't accept it. And that is when I decided that I was going to come to the State Department if I could get myself a transfer. That was the thing that did it!

Well, when I got my transfer and went around the office, by this time, many, many weeks had gone by, and said goodbye to the young man, his name was Bill Bluette, a French name (St. Paul has lots of French Canadian names), he cried, he just cried. Naturally, when he'd been given this job with a two-grade increase, he wasn't going to say “no” to it; and I never blamed it on him because he didn't do it; it was this guy from Washington.

And you see, because the office had become bigger and bigger and bigger, the job had expanded. There was nothing wrong with dividing the job, only in that I was the one on the job, I'm the one who should have been given the better part of the job. But you see, again, that's part of the whitewash. I didn't like it, but what could I do about it? (laughing) Can you imagine anything like that happening now?

But I look at it, too, that that's maybe what triggered me into doing all this. And I'm happy that it happened, for that's what happened.

Q: It really spurred you on.

METCALF: It did, it did.

Q: So, there again you reacted positively to a negative thing. So when it came to the AAFSW discussions of the '72 Directive, you were definitely on the side of — or was there any ambivalence?

METCALF: No, oh, no. This other thing is, that Mr. Berry, whom I really liked; the reason I liked him so much was that he was so highly intelligent. Just the fact that when Jean and I wanted to go up to Rome, somebody else would have said, “No, you stay right here.” Not Burton. He knew that we were excited about it all, and he had that kind of mind, that he wanted to explore. And so, “Sure; just get back here.” He trusted us to realize that we would get back there, which we did. That's why I always enjoyed working for him.

But he also assumed that when Lee and I got married I would just be leaving the office. That's what happens, it would be like that. I thought of it that way, too.

Q: The other day I talked to a young tandem spouse that I interviewed in the Department. I reminded her at one point that women officers had to resign when they became Foreign Service wives.

METCALF: Oh, yes.

Q: She said, “I can't believe that. I came into the Service on my own and I'll be darned if I'd give it up for. I wouldn't expect to give it up for marriage.” So we've really come a long way.

METCALF: Yes. And after all, I had a staff position. You would think that you always need staff. Those jobs are more readily “tradeable;” you can work in an accounting office any old place.

Q: Portable.

METCALF: Yes. It isn't a specific officer's job. But I have asked some of the younger women about this tandem business. I think those that are honest think the Department suffers from it. In the long term, or even short term, they do suffer from it.

Q: And I think the Department definitely suffered from the 1972 Directive.

METCALF: It's a tough one, isn't it? You know, as a woman I want to see women have everything that they're capable of having, and progress. And I would think that now that they're growing up that way, they aren't going to be satisfied with anything else. I grew up having the feeling that I would have some education, I would have a job for a while, and then I would get married. That's the way I wanted it, because that's the way I looked at it. My friends were all getting married.

Q: That's what everyone did.

METCALF: Everybody did. And after all, how could you look after a husband, and children, and have a full-time job? Of course, we didn't have all the household gadgets, althoug(she laughs) there certainly was more help to be had. I remember when, well, just baby-sitting. When we came back from Pakistan, Charles was two and Lee was here as Officer-in-Charge, Afghan-Pakistan Affairs. We were in an apartment on California Street. It was

wonderful, we could walk to the Afghans, we could walk to the Pakistanis, and all that, but we had this little boy at home. It was no problem getting good baby-sitters, I really felt we were able to get good ones and get ones who came again and again. But it was danged expensive. And there was one month when I decided we had spent, oh, way more than $50 for baby-sitting, and that was much too much for Lee's salary.

Q: That would have been in, oh, about 1951?

METCALF: Yes. 1950-1951.

Q: Oh, yes. $50 a month for baby-sitting in those days would have been tremendous. That's about wha(she laughs) rents were.

METCALF: It was just way too much. So there were a few times there that we just cut back and we went off to parties from the office, say. Because we did feel that he needed to go always; and if I could go, so much the better. Because I feel, early on I learned that you learn one heck of a lot from the women. I've brought home things to Lee very innocently that were really important. And also that was part of the life, part of the fun. (she laughs) Where are we?

Q: Well, I think, where we are as a service is that there are just certain givens that are not conducive to career unless the Foreign Service is also your career. My feeling was that although the '72 Directive was definitely a step in the right direction, and that it had to come, as you said, because of the outside societal pressures, nothing was put in its place. I mean, we were suddenly no responsibility. Now the thing that interests me, one of the things that appeared on one of the tapes that Mary Lou did, is the emphasis on training for ambassadors' wives at the Overseas Briefing Center. I wonder if the ambassador's wife has ever walked in there and said, “Well, what are you talking about? I have no responsibilities. Why should I? I thought there was a Directive that said I don't have to do this.” Now, whether that happens or not I don't know.

METCALF: Incidentally, this friend, Jean Nelson, was a graduate of Vassar and she took the Foreign Service exam later, after I'd stopped working, probably in early 1947. I've always felt the reason she didn't pass was because she was a woman and she didn't pass the orals.

Q: Of course.

METCALF: It was as simple as that. When she left the Service, she went on to Czechoslovakia, then she resigned and went back to school, to Stanford, and got her Ph.D., in History, I think. And she wrote her dissertation on material that she'd gotten in Romania about an early patriarch and how he had sort of put the princely states together and so on. Then she went to work for SRI, which really isn't part of the University at all, and I think worked for them the rest of the time until she retired a couple of years ago.

Q: Still Jean Nelson?

METCALF: Yes, she never married. She worked on many projects for the Navy while she was at the Research Institute. She lives in Menlo Park, came to see us in Tucson two years ago, we still keep our friendship going. I've always felt so strongly that maybe they had taken in another woman that year, so Jean wasn't taken in. No reason on earth, because she was very bright and had a good education. She had been in Europe, had traveled around the world. Her family was rather wealthy, from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. She'd had many advantages and she'd made good use of them. She would have made an excellent officer.

Q: Strange that they didn't take her.

METCALF: Because they had taken someone else, I just feel. They had taken a woman that year. I don't know whether someone asked her some question that she bogged down on, but I know that she would have done as well as anybody else. (End of tape)

Q: Andrew Corry [who was] in Pakistan asked about the, how would you call it?, well, the gift, really, that he made to the Missions where he served. I know Lahore was one, Freetown was another, and I believe he went to Sri Lanka. I wonder if he did the same there?

METCALF: Yes. He left many of his mother's things. He left all of her silver, beautiful flatware of, it seemed like, hundreds of pieces; and decorated silver for the table, epergnes, flower bowls and such. Then he had collected a very fine record library. Of course that was in the days of the LP, and I think it wasn't even stereo, it was hi-fi. He left the machine and the library. He'd had speakers put in the fireplace and he used to give dinner parties, inviting people who liked classical music, and then afterwards they'd sit around his fireplace listening to music coming out of those speakers. He belonged to several rather erudite book clubs, especiallBritish book clubs. He collected a marvelous library, and there was a lovely library room in that house at 50 Empress Road, a marvelous house, which had been bought as our embassy at the time of partition.

The Gelly felt there's only one city in what is now going to be Pakistan, and that is Lahore, the old Mogul city. So they found this marvelous house on Empress Road. It was owned by a Sikh family who had gone to India, and we paid for it with Indian currency.

Q: What was that called, that program?

METCALF: Yes. PL 480, but it had... It was probably the only house in Lahore that had a swimming pool. It even had pillars, and a roof that covered part of the pool. There was a CG in between Andy and Lee, so some time had gone by. By that time the American school had become quite large — an AID contingent, etc. — and a great many American engineers who were there for the Link canals project, a tremendous undertaking that was arranged by a treaty between India and Pakistan, with AID money, whereby water from two rivers was diverted into two Indian rivers. Then these Link canals were dug

across the country linking the three rivers having water with the two rivers that had none, a spectacular project.

I thought it was interesting that you had the same experience with Andrew Corry. Of course, we didn't take over after him but we were there while he was. I remember the first time we saw him again, we'd been to the beach on a Sunday afternoon. The mail boat came in from the Canary Islands with vegetables. You can imagine how we looked, bedraggled children, sand, etc. We stopped to ask if we could pick up some things for him from the mail boat. There he was, in Freetown, Sierra Leone, on a Sunday afternoon, in bow tie and coat, as proper as could be. The only person in Freetown, probably ...

Q: When we arrived in Freetown, we had known Daphne and Desmond [inaudible].

METCALF: Oh, we knew them, too, from Lahore.

Q: Desmond was the British High Commissioner in Freetown. And at that point we had an embassy launch, because there was a huge bay. The airport was on one end of the bay and the city was on the other. So we had to wait for ferries and buses, etc., so we finally got a launch. It didn't last long but anyway it was functioning when Andrew Corry arrived as Ambassador. I shall never [forget] the launch, speeding across the bay from the airport to the town, and here was Andrew Corry. The launch pulled up to the dock and he stepped off, and without looking at anyone in our mission, he stepped off and called out, "Daphne, my dear, how are you?" (laughter) Then he greeted the members of his staff. There he was, looking like a figurehead on the launch, stepping off, and very properly, right to Daphne.

METCALF: We knew Andy, first, when we were in Karachi. He was in Delhi and made a trip up with his mother, whom we met. This was when he was Minerals Attach#. So we had all bought these little Karachi red and green gems. We'd ask Andy about them, whether we'd paid too much, that sort of thing. He would take out his little eyeglass and look at our

gems , and say, “Doris, if it makes you happy, you didn't pay too much.” (laughter) And I knew ... !

The next time we saw them was in Madrid when we were on our way out of Athens. His mother was not at all well by then, ageing. That's when he decided that a good place for him to be was back in the subcontinent where he could have servants and his mother could live very comfortably and he could afford it. So when the job in Lahore came up, he wanted it, got it and took her there. I believe she died there. That's why he left all her things there, as a kind of in memoriam to her. The CG is not using Empress Road. Another story that's too bad and I don't know all the details, but they did abandon it. We own the building. It's not saleable but marvelous to use.

What happened after East Pakistan became Bangladesh, the political structure changed. Originally, you had a governor of East Pakistan and a governor of West Pakistan. Lee did his business with the latter governor, even though by that time the Embassy had moved out of Karachi and was up in Rawalpindi, Islamabad. There was so much going on that was strictly East Pakistan, not federal, so Lahore was a very active post, politically. People would come from the Embassy and be amazed that they had met all these other top political people who were there to see the governor.

After Bangladesh was created, everything was changed. No longer was there need for a governor of “East Pakistan.” The house on Empress Road is next door to what had been the British governor-general's mansion, grounds with peacocks, etc. So then the embassy's focus and responsibility of the CG there changed markedly, so probably there was no need for this great big house. But why didn't they do what had been done before?, bring in living quarters as well as the offices? I like to preserve fabulous property even if it costs me money to do it.

Q: Absolutely! It's worth it. This is the impression we create in the country, that we're preserving one of their monuments, if it can be called a monument.

METCALF: Yes, it is. The Singh family was a princely family and their property should always remain intact there. But it got out of hand financially because of how it was handled and repaired. Blame isn't appropriate. Our people come and go, someone starts a project, someone else doesn't continue it, there isn't the money, and all this. So that's what happened. They decided to use the house out in Gulburg, in a Lahore suburb, which in our time the AID chief had. It's just a big modern house. I suppose for those living there, there's an advantage in living in a more modern house. But the Empress Road house was gorgeous. And Andy left all these things in it and it would have been nice if they could all have stayed in place. The servants who'd worked for Andy treasured these things, treated them like their own. I used them all the time because I felt they were part of the establishment.

Q: If you have time, I'd like to ask you what was your role in the crisis center for the Iran hostage families in 1980?

METCALF: The person who could really tell you is Sylvia Joseph. She was on deck 444 days. I was there some months. And I ran into this: we were called “the Iranian Working Group: Family Support Group.” We ran hot lines with the hostage families. While we were in Lahore, we had the first Pak-Indian war. A number of us, over 500, went to Tehran for safe haven. Can you imagine tha(laughing) as “safe haven” these days? We spent roughly three months there.

The war between Pakistan and India had ended, but there was such anti-American feeling among the Pakistanis. They felt we had supported the Indians, they felt the Indians started the war (although facts show that Muslims started it in Kashmir). Lee advised the Ambassador that as far as Lahore was concerned, we should stay out a while longer because of the anti-Americanism. They were particularly concerned about children going to school, hate calls, and that sort of thing.

So we stayed in Tehran, and it was Sylvia who asked me if I'd like to come in and be a part of this effort.

Q: She was an evacuee there, too?

METCALF: No, I meant while we were in Lahore. Then of course we came back to Lahore, and the war ended. So when the Iranian hostages were taken later, Sylvia and Harold had been posted in Iran in the western part, I think. I can't recall the place name. We no longer had a post there even at the time relations broke off. Anyway, Sylvia came on deck right away with this proposal. [showing a paper to Fenzi] They put out this after the episode ended. Those are the people who were working there most of the time that I was there.

Sylvia, whose background is Lebanese and who speaks Arabic, knew Iran and the Iranians. She could tell you, now, all the ins and outs. I think what we did was necessary. Louisa Kennedy and Katherine Keogh had their flag operation in OR too. We were all in the same big room. In order to man those telephones, those of us on the hotline tried to call every family within a day or two. We sort of got into the habit of calling the same people back, because we could get acquainted that way.

Q: Each of you taking a certain family?

METCALF: It wasn't strictly speaking that way but there were certain ones with whom we struck up a friendship, with whom we could continue the conversation. That's when I called this woman, a Mrs. Moore, who was up in Mount Vernon, N.Y. with her children. She told me she was taking a computer course, so each time we talked I could ask about it, she'd tell me what she'd learned that day, and it gave us something to hang onto.

Sylvia knew everybody, all the families. She met every one of the hostages when they came, all of that.

Q: I see Margaret Sullivan was on this.

METCALF: She wasn't there when I was called on. Perhaps she had come and gone. When I was there, Betsy Barnes, Marion Precht, Sharon Simms, and Sylvia were the ones who worked with me. Once every week or two we would talk to a psychologist. Oh, if we'd picked up some item on the phone that we wanted to ask him about, he would give us ideas.

Q: How often did you go in? Every day?

METCALF: No. Sylvia went every day at the beginning, then others began to take over. Then we'd go in for part of a day. I usually went in two days, for about six or seven months. I happened to be there when the whole thing ended.

Q: I think that's very interesting, that you would get to know the families, and when you "saw" something you were uneasy with, you'd discuss that with the psychologist. What would happen, then? Would someone follow up?

METCALF: He would maybe tell you something, that the next time you talked to them. He carved problems out. You see, these families were scattered all over the U.S. One wife, even, was in Saudi Arabia; Betsy Barnes talked with her regularly. She was Iranian, actually. Her husband, John Limbert, never let that out, you can imagine. It was a concern. She was there with her two or three children and Betsy had a very ongoing telephone friendship with her.

I had certain ones that I felt that way about. One of them was a schoolteacher, another was a mother in Houston. One day she sent us up a box of those marvelous chewable pralines. She introduced me to them, I'm sorry to say!

We had problems with local radio and TV stations [who] caught rumors, and in the hometowns it would be flashed that "the hostages are expected to be killed" or some such thing had happened. Then the families would be so upset and would be on the hotline. Or when we called them, we would ask, "What have you heard recently?" It might well

be something untrue. We had exact instructions never to tell anything but the truth, the absolute truth.

Q: If you knew it.

METCALF: Yes, or you'd tell the truth and try to dispel the rumor. And of course, the media are always ready to try to tell a good story. But I think that was one of our main functions, to handle that.

Mrs. Moore, up in Mount Vernon, took the computer course. Then it was Thanksgiving, so I asked her what they'd be having that day. She told me there was a special cranberry recipe that she used every year. I asked her to give it to me, so we use use that cranberry recipe every year! (laughing) This kind of thing. We started these conversations that became ongoing friendships. I think they were helpful.

Q: Oh, I'm sure they were, no doubt about it.

METCALF: Once [in] a while when you reached someone, they'd be just very low; so just letting them talk. I think I started out to tell you that when Sylvia asked me if I would like to do this, I felt that I could contribute because of spending that three months living in a hotel right down from the Embassy, I knew every foot of that Embassy grounds. I knew all those streets, I knew those hotels, I knew every possible location in the whole are. So, when talking with people I could do it with a certain authority. “Oh, yes, those grounds are beautiful.” Several were kept in a building next to the embassy grounds. I think I also tried to give the idea that although what we see on TV are these fist-thrusting Iranians, they're not all behaving or thinking that way. There are rational people.

I think the hardest part for the families — one of them even said to me, “If my son had a prison sentence and I knew that by a certain date it would be over, I would hate it but I would know that day would come.” But they lived from day to day not knowing if their loved

one was going to be alive the next day, let alone whether he/she ever would live to be freed. That was the hard part, the not knowing. They all voiced that, the uncertainty of it all.

Q: Mrs. Elbrick said the very same thing to me when her husband was kidnapped in Brazil. She said, "Not knowing what was happening to him. I really almost hoped that he weren't alive if he were being mistreated."

Well, that must have been the most difficult part. And that was the part that you really couldn't answer to, could you.

METCALF: No, no. We tried to put forth that "everyone" didn't behave that way. And that, yes, this group was in power now but not forever. And that your loved one was a professional, he chose to be there, these were all volunteers for those jobs. By and large, they would be able to handle it. They wouldn't have gone there if they didn't think they coulhandle it. Poor Richard Queen became sick — I believe it was multiple sclerosis — it was a strain.

Q: You did that for how long?

METCALF: For six or seven months. I came in maybe in the spring. I was there all summer, through the fall until Inauguration Day and they were freed.

Q: I have a photograph of myself taking down the yellow ribbon when. We were in Recife, and the USIS man, the minute that things were happening, wanted to call in the press. He didn't have to call them in, but they came over. Guido would not let anything be released until that plane took off for Algeria. Fortunately, the residence was near enough. I had a fever of 103, but he said, "I'll call you when the plane has taken off, and you can come over and take the ribbons down." Because I had put them up and I wanted to take them down, and I do have the photo downstairs.

METCALF: I put a yellow ribbon on our Christmas wreath and we used that for our Christmas card that year.

Q: It was certainly an event of history. I'm delighted to have that information. I may even come back to you again, because of course one of the chapters will be on terrorism/crisis situations/hostage-taking/kidnaping. And to have the viewpoint ... (end of tape)

METCALF: ... director of South Asian Affairs. At that time, it was India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Naomi was very solicitous of the families, the wives, helped them to understand and get acquainted in Washington. When Bert went out, I think maybe that's when they went to Istanbul, the timing seems about right that he would have been CG in Istanbul. When he left, this director of SOA was followed by Don and Jean Kennedy. Now, these were not Foreign Service people, they were Government people. He was an economist who had come to Washington in WW II when, for example, products all over the world were being bought up so they wouldn't fall into Nazi hands. I think he was involved in that.

They knew Andy Corry way back then. Anyway, Jean saw how closely knit SOA was and how everybody liked one another, how we all had immediate entre into the Indian, Afghan and other embassies, and how those women gravitated toward our wives and, invited us, etc. So she kept this big network going. When Don Kennedy made a trip out to the subcontinent, he met Lee in Karachi and brought Lee back for his staff. And when he was up in Afghanistan, Roy Percival was up there. We were ready then for transfer and he asked that Percival be brought back for the Afghan Desk.

So these ongoing friendships last to today. We all get together at Christmastime, still very good friends. Some of us are gone, of course. Naomi lost Bert, and Jean lives out in Oregon, which had been her home. I went to a baby shower a couple of weeks ago — Roy Percival's son is married to Tom W[inaudible]'s daughter and Susan is having a baby in August. So as soon as I got home I sat down and wrote Jean, saying, “I've been to this

shower today, [details about it].” The Josephs aren't, strictly speaking, a part of that in that they didn't serve in SOA as such. They were in Karachi when we got there, and the Simons and the Newsomes were early there. The Simons did serve in SOA; so we include them from time to time. You see how I say “they” and “we.” I think we always felt a part of it.

Q: We always did. Naomi in her interview spoke very warmly of that time, too. Hers is a very interesting interview. You may like to look at it some day, and I know that she'd like to read yours.

I have a question. I didn't know her before I started interviewing. I went to this lovely cozy small Georgetown house, with this very delicate, fragile little woman who began talking to me. I have now been back three or four times and I'm absolutely astonished at, I wouldn't say “iron will,” but what quality did she have as a leader bringing women together in Nigeria, bringing women together in Liberia?

METCALF: Yes, she has that.

Q: Is it a quiet firmness? A determination?

METCALF: This sounds like too ordinary a word, but she is just such a decent person. By that I mean she's loyal, she's not gossipy at all, we only learn about each other things that we would tell each other. She keeps all confidences. Unfortunately, now she's fighting rheumatoid arthritis and she's in pain a lot of the time.

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BIOGRAPHICAL DATASpouse: Lee Ellis Metcalf

Date entered Service: 194(1944)Left Service: 1973

Posts: 1944Istanbul, Turkey 1944Bucharest, Romania 1948Yale University 1949Karachi, Pakistan 1951Washington, DC - SOA 1954Athens, Greece 1957Army War College 1958Inspection Corps 1961Washington, DC - SOA and Senior Seminar Coordinator 1964Lahore, Pakistan 1966Dacca, Bangladesh 1969Inspection Corps

Status: Retired Foreign Service Spouse

Date and place of birth: January 20, 1920; New Orleans, Louisiana

Maiden Name: Magnusson

Parents: Charles Henry and Hilma Magnusson - Electrical Construction

Schools:Grammar School - Winnipeg, Calgary, Canada

University of Minnesota

Dickinson College

Date and place of marriage: January 8, 1946; El Paso, Texas

Children: One son, Carles Lee Metcalf

Profession:

Accountan(Finance Office, Department of War, Fort Snelling)

WW II appointment as Abstract Clerk and in FS as Code Clerk and Secretary

Positions held: At Post: Secretary, Istanbul, Turkey and Bucharest, Romania Taught typing class of Pakistani women students, Lahore, Pakistan Treasurer, American Women's Club, Athens, Greece Benefit Bazaars, Karachi, Pakistan and Dacca, Bangladesh

In Washington: Five months orientation in the Department (Visa, Passport, Code Room, Foreign Service administration) as a Secretary, Code Clerk Worked on the Hot Line to the families of hostages in Iran AAFSW Board, Membership

Honors:Lovel tribute from USG and American Business wives on our return from 3 months safe haven in Teheran during the Pak/Indian War of 1965

End of interview